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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF NORTON-RADSTOCK.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the
year ended 31st December, 1959.

To the Chairman, and Members of the Norton-Radstock Urban District
Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions
of your District for the year ended 31st December, 1959.

SECTION A

(1)	Area (in acres)	3,360.
(2)	Population	12,410.
(3)	Number of inhabited houses ..	4,193
(4)	Rateable Value (31st December, 1959) ..	£106,860
(5)	Sum represented by Penny Rate on 31st December, 1959 ..	£435.8s.2d.
(6)	Chief Industries:-	
	(a) Coal Mining.	
	(b) Paper bag making.	
	(c) Printing.	
	(d) Glove Making.	
	(e) Wagon Repairing.	
	(f) Timber Constructional Works.	
	(g) Boot and Shoe Making.	
	(h) Agriculture.	
	(i) Engineering.	



Unemployment.

The figures at the Midsomer Norton Labour Exchange for those unemployed
were, on the average, per month, as follows:-

Males - 95 Females - 18.

Vital Statistics.

Births.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live births:-			
Legitimate	111	92	203
Illegitimate	3	3	6
Total ...	114	95	209
Stillbirths:-			
Legitimate	4	4	8
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Total ...	4	4	8

The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was 16.8 comparative
factor 10.4.

Cont/-.....

Deaths

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
91	57	148

The death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was 11.9 comparative factor 10.1.

Death rate from causes associated with childbirth	0
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age -	
All infants per 1000 live births	9.5
Legitimate infants per 1000 live births	9.5
Illegitimate infants per 1000 live births	Nil.

Deaths in infants under 1 year of age -

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 1 week	1	1	2
1 - 4 weeks	0	0	0
Under 12 months	0	0	0
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>

Causes of deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Prematurity	1	0	1
Congenital Malformation	0	1	1
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>

Causes of deaths were:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Heart Disease (1) Coronary	9	2	11
(2) Other Forms	7	7	14
Hypertensive Heart Disease	2	2	4
Other Circulatory Disease	5	4	9
Cerebral Haemorrhage or Thrombosis	6	8	14
Cancer (1) Stomach	3	3	6
(2) Lungs or Bronchus	5	0	5
(3) Breast	0	3	3
(4) Other Sites	7	9	16
Influenza	1	1	2
Pneumonia	7	4	11
Bronchitis	3	1	4
Tuberculosis (1) Respiratory	1	0	1
(2) Other	2	0	2
Other Diseases of the Respiratory System	13	0	13
Gastro-enteritis	3	0	3
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1	0	1
Nephritis	1	0	1
Prostatic Disease	1	0	1
Diabetes Mellitus	0	1	1
Leukaemia	0	1	1
Other Infective or Parasitic Diseases	1	0	1
Congenital Malformation	0	1	1
Other defined or ill-defined Diseases	9	5	14
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	2	4
All Other Accidents	2	3	5
	<u>91</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>148</u>
Total ...	91	57	148

SECTION B.

General provision of Health Services for the area:-

(1) Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

- (a) Public Health Inspector and Housing Surveyor.
- (b) Surveyor and Water Engineer.
- (c) Temporary Medical Officer of Health (Part-Time).

(2) Auxiliary Services:-

(a) Laboratory Facilities.

Provided by the County Authorities; the nearest laboratory being in Bath.

(b) Ambulance Facilities.

Under the control of the Health Department of the County Council at Taunton. There is a local Ambulance Station, but all requests for ambulances have to be made to a central office at Glastonbury. The service works well. A car service is also provided for patients attending hospital, if such transport is essential on medical grounds.

(c) Nursing in the home.

(i) Maternity and District Nurses.

The nurses in the area provide an efficient and sympathetic service. The present staff are very much appreciated.

(ii) The Home Help Service.

This service is very valuable. Although all essential needs are met, the demands still exceed the supply.

(iii) Red Cross Depot.

Considerable use is made of the loan department. The asset to the community of having a leaven of trained medical personnel cannot be overstressed.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.

(i) Tuberculosis.

The local clinic run by the County Health Authority is at Radstock. This disease is declining. Improved diagnosis and drugs for curing the malady are giving results. It is now fairly easy to get beds in hospital for patients when required.

(ii) Venereal Disease.

The infrequent cases occurring in this area are treated at clinics in Bath and Bristol. There are some obvious advantages in having the clinics at a small distance.

(iii) Infant and Child Welfare Services.

The clinics are reasonably well attended, and good work is done. It would seem desirable to link this work more closely with that of the family doctor.

(iv) Children's Orthopaedic Clinic.

This is held at the County Clinic at Radstock. There would appear to be some overlap here with the hospital orthopaedic service. Children, found to require orthopaedic attention by Doctors attending infant clinics or routine school examinations, could be referred through their family Doctors for consultants advice at children's orthopaedic clinics at hospitals.

(v) Maternity Services.

It is considered that the attention given over confinements in the home by the nurses and by the staff at Paulton Hospital reaches a very high standard. Extra beds are required at Paulton, as some mothers cannot still be booked in at Paulton and have to be referred to other hospitals e.g. St. Martins Hospital at Bath. Two small side wards are also wanted, one for ante-natal cases and the other for the isolation of any febrile case. St. Martins also accepts some difficult cases from this area when the patient's doctor considers a larger hospital can best serve the patient's needs. A flying squad can be summoned to emergencies in the home.

Local Doctors continue to see their maternity cases with the District Nurses, which is advantageous to all concerned.

The supply of midwives continues to cause anxiety.

(vi) Dental Treatment.

The state of dental hygiene throughout the community leaves much to be desired. Public carelessness is chiefly responsible, but the charges made to the patient in the National Health Service is a large aggravating factor.

Excellent dental treatment is available locally. It is doubtful, however, if the private practitioners could cope with the work if all who need attention sought it.

(vii) Mental Health Services.

The County Health Authority runs the service. The local mental health officer is very helpful. Considerable strides are being made in methods available in treating mental illness. It is slow, and old prejudices die hard, but the public are beginning to realize that illness of the mind must be considered in the same light as disease of any other part of the body. Antiquated hospital buildings do not encourage people to accept treatment.

(viii) No action has been taken under the National Assistance Act, 1948.

(e) Hospital Services.

The district is in the Bath Clinical Area, and consultant advice is usually obtained from this quarter.


Claverton Down Hospital admits cases of Infectious Disease.

Urgent cases are dealt with expeditiously through the Emergency Bed Bureau.

The buildings of the various hospitals serving this area vary in age. In spite of piecemeal improvements none of them conform with the latest ideas. Patients cannot be nursed sufficiently under conditions approximating to the open air. It is not surprising, therefore, that the utmost vigilance is required to restrain the activity of bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

The shortage of beds for the chronic sick continues. Owing to the increasing proportion of elderly people in the population this problem is likely to persist.

The waiting time for outpatient appointments and admission to hospital in some specialities is still too long.



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Cont/-.....

(f) General Health Services.

The National Health Service should be free at the time of use. The division of patients into paying and non-paying classes leads to abuses and is disliked. The medical needs of a patient should be the only criterion in considering his treatment. The supplying of drugs on National Health Service terms to private patients is opposed.

(g) Care of the blind.

The service for those with defective vision is run by the County Health Authority.

(h) Cancer.

Statistics show that whilst deaths due to lung cancer for heavy smokers are 1 in 8, for non-smokers it is estimated to be 1 in 300, with intermediate graduations according to the quantity smoked. These figures merit constant publicity. Owing to the large financial interests involved in this matter the responsible authority appears deliberately to be evading its responsibility.

A local branch of the Cancer Relief Organisation works in this area.

(i) Epileptics and Spastics.

The family Doctor treats such cases. The County Health Authority is interested in defective children.

(j) Senility.

Voluntary bodies do much to help the aged in this district. The visiting of people who live alone is very meritorious and rewarding work.

SECTION C.

Sanitary circumstances for the District.

(1) Water.

Sources of supply:-

- (i) The Bottlehead Springs at Downhead.
- (ii) Downside and Gurney Slade Springs.
- (iii) Chilcompton Springs.

Mains - Quality.

This has been in general satisfactory. The water has been tested constantly. The Chilcompton Supply is a source of anxiety. It is hoped that when the Chew Valley water is available the Chilcompton Supply can be dispensed with.

Quantity.

This is insufficient. The shortage will continue until water from the Chew Valley Reservoir is available. From June to October during the prolonged dry spell a 6 hour rationing period was required.

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Results of samples taken from analysis:-

Raw Water.				Treated after going into supply.			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical.	
Sat.	Unsat.	Sat.	Unsat.	Sat.	Unsat.	Sat.	Unsat.
-	-	3	-	34	2	-	-

The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

No action has been taken for possible sources of contamination.

(2) Swimming Bath.

The water is by Council supply and is chlorinated and filtered by a Bell Chlorination and Filtration Plant. There are 122 Season Ticket holders and in addition to them on an average of 130 persons used the swimming bath daily. The water tests have been satisfactory.

(3) Sanitation.

The district is served by two reasonably modern sewage disposal works. Except for a part of Radstock Road the whole district is sewered.

During the year the drainage of 17 houses at Underhill Lane was changed from a septic tank to a main sewer. This alteration is especially welcomed as the septic tank was a source of complaint in the neighbourhood.

Closet accommodation -

As there are no recorded conversions, the total number of chemical and pail closets is estimated to be the same as the previous year that is:-

(a)	Chemical closets	12.
(b)	Pail closets	13.

(4) Camping Sites.

There are no camping sites in the district.

There is one licensed individual moveable dwelling.

(5) Public Cleansing.

The entire district is covered for the weekly removal of refuse. This is done by direct labour.

Two vehicles are employed.

Trade refuse is removed by request and the actual cost is charged.

Two controlled tips are used for the disposal of refuse. It is considered that it would be preferable to have the refuse incinerated.

(6) Control of Pests.

One rodent operator is employed on a part time basis.

SECTION D.

Housing.

On 31st December, 1959, there were 4193 permanent dwellings in this area.

1022 are owned by the Local Authority.
3171 are privately owned.

The number of houses gained by building and conversions during the year was 94

The number of houses closed or demolished during the year was 36

There was, therefore, a net gain of 58.

The number of houses required to replace those scheduled for demolition 150.

The total number of applications for Council Houses at the end of the year is 250.

Number of Post War houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1959.		Housing Programme for 1960	
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise.	For slum clearance.	For other purposes
573	351	26	Nil

Action taken during the year -

(a) The number of houses closed or demolished under Section 17 of the Housing Act, 1957 (individual unfits) was ... 36

(b) Under Rent Act, 1957 (1st schedule) the number of applications received for Certificates of Disrepair was . 2

The number of Certificates issued was 1

	Houses erected during year.		Houses in course of erection.		Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats or dwellings.	Lost from conversion of two or more houses to one.
	For Slum Clearance	For other purposes	For Slum Clearance	For other purposes		
Local Authority	28	Nil	10	Nil	Nil	Nil
Private Enterprise	Nil	66	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

The number of applications for standard amenities was 46

The number of applications approved was 39

The number of houses where standard amenities have been provided was Nil.

SECTION E.FOOD.Premises where food is prepared.

The number registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 is 46.

(1) Milk.

(a)	Number of Registered Distributors	5
(b)	Number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms)	5
(c)	Number of Licensed Dealers of Designated Milk	4
(d)	Number of Supplementary Licences issued to distributors with dairies outside this area	2

No samples have been tested during the year by the Local Authority.

(2) Ice-Cream.

Number of Premises registered for:-

(a)	Manufacture and retail	5
(b)	Manufacture only	2
(c)	Retail only	37.

(3) Food Hygiene.Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

Action taken during the year under these Regulations:-

Several informal notices were served during the year.

No systematic survey of food premises for compliance with the regulations has yet been possible.

(4) Slaughterhouses and Bacon Factories.

(a) Private slaughterhouses -

Number Licensed	4
Number in use	3

(b) There are no bacon factories in the area.

(c) There are no slaughterhouses leased or owned by the local authority.

(d) There is no slaughterhouses for horses in the area.

It has always been considered that the reopening of small private slaughterhouses was an unsatisfactory measure. As at the time it was stated to be a 'temporary' measure, it is considered 'indefinite' would have been the better choice of a word.

One abattoir would adequately serve this area and supervision and inspection of meat would thereby be greatly simplified.

Little inspection has been possible during the year. Reliance has had to be placed on local tradesmen, who in the main are most co-operative in drawing attention to doubtful carcasses.

This state of affairs is obviously unsatisfactory.

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(5) Chemical and Bacteriological examination of food.

The County Laboratories carry out any examinations.

(6) Clean Air Act, 1956.

No action has been taken under this regulation.

(7) Road Accidents.

In view of the frequency of these, it is noted with regret, that the 30 m.p.h. speed limit signs on the main road passing through this district is largely ignored.

(8) Nutrition.

The health and physique of the children is satisfactory.

SECTION F.Notifiable Diseases.

The following cases of infectious diseases (excluding tuberculosis) were notified during the year:-

Disease.	Cases Notified.	Deaths.
Measles	141	0
Scarlet Fever	2	0
Whooping cough	5	0
Acute Influenza Pneumonia	6	1
Erysipelas	1	0

Vaccination.

No vaccinations have been carried out by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health Smallpox Prevention Regulations, 1907.

The vaccination state of the community gives continuing cause for anxiety.

Number vaccinated or revaccinated during the year:-

Age Groups	Under 1 year.	1 year.	2 - 4 years.	5 - 14 years.	15 years and over.	Total
Primary Vaccination	70	7	3	8	6	94.
Re-vaccination.	0	0	1	0	12	13.

Diphtheria.

No cases were reported during the year.

Cont/-.....

Immunization.

The following are the number of children at 31st December, 1959, who had completed a course of immunization (whether primary or booster) within the last 5 years (i.e. at any time since 1st January, 1955).

Age at December, 1959	Under 1 1959	1 1958	2 1957	3 1956	4 1955	5 - 9 1954-50	10 - 14 1949-45	Total Under 15
Numbers	26	138	170	172	156	657	88	1,407

The following numbers of children in age groups were immunized during 1959.

Age Groups	Under 1 year.	1 - 4 years.	5 - 9 years.	Total.
Numbers	197	36	5	238

The number of children receiving a reinforcing immunization during the year was 77 (all between the ages of 4 - 9 years).

Whooping Cough.

This is considered a serious illness in the very young. It is considered, therefore, that unless there is any valid contraindication, it should always be given as a mixed vaccine with the Diphtheria Taxoid.

The following numbers of children received a primary course of whooping cough vaccine (singly or in combination) during the year:-

Age Group	Under 1 year.	1	2	3	4	5 - 14	Total
Numbers	183	18	5	6	5	1	218

Poliomyelitis Vaccination.

The following are the number of persons who received a course of primary inoculation (two injections) and the number who received a third (reinforcing) inoculation during the year:-

	Young Persons.	Children	Other Groups.			Number of persons all groups who received a third (reinforcing) inoculation.
Born in year	1933 - 42	1943 - 59	Expectant Mothers.	Doctors and Families	Ambulance staff and families.	
Numbers	735	1,463	74	3	2	1,858

There would appear no difficulty now in getting adequate supplies of vaccine.

Scabies.

The occasional case was dealt with by the family Doctor. At present this malady presents no problem in this district.

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Tuberculosis.

	<u>Total cases notified</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Respiratory	3	1
Non-respiratory ...	0	2

My thanks once more are due to my colleagues for their large contribution toward this report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A.H. Bulleid, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Medical Officer of Health.

